

Dublin Notes.

(From the National papers.)

LORD SPENCER, at the house dinner of the National Liberal Club, in proposing success to the Liberal party, said there had been many occasions in the past when the Liberal party was in a worse position than now. Referring to the *Budget*, his Lordship expressed satisfaction at the modifications which, owing to the opposition of the Liberal leaders, had been made in Mr. Goschen's proposals. In regard to Ireland, he maintained that the Conservatives by their policy had shown that they were blind to all the lessons of experience. One of the reasons why Liberals failed in dealing with the Irish question was that they did not sufficiently consult Irish opinion in measures they brought forward. The same fault was shown in a more marked degree by the present Government. He feared that they were on the eve of great difficulties in Ireland, in consequence of the Government refusing to deal with the arrears question last year. Having enumerated other matters, in which he held the Government acted contrary to Irish views, his Lordship concluded by declaring his complete confidence in the policy of Mr. Gladstone, which was to throw on the Irish people the responsibility of Irish affairs.

The *Weekly Despatch* observes that the selection of Mr. William O'Brien and Mr. John Dillon for the honours of Coercion martyrdom illustrates the meanness and brutality of the Irish Government. They happen to be the weakest of the Irish party, particularly in the respiratory organs, and the sentences are calculated to shorten or extinguish their lives. But they are also conspicuous by their patriotism and the moral elevation of their character qualities that have strikingly endeared them to their countrymen, and have won the admiration of all Englishmen, and, therefore, they are selected by our lank Heliogabalus for the infamous treatment accorded to criminals. If, because he has a Parliamentary majority at his back Mr. Balfour is justified in this treatment of his political opponents, he cannot complain if, when he has the misfortune to be in a Parliamentary minority, he should be well whacked with his own stick.

The Home Rulers are in great spirits over the severe shake the Government got in the division on the Under-Secretary Bill. The Government whips are circulating a story to the effect that the smallness of the majority was purely an accident caused by the absence of their men at the first night of the Italian opera at Drury Lane. But the truth is that the whips found it quite impossible to convince a large number of the Tory rank and file that they were in any way called upon to endow this office for the joint advantage of Colonel King-Harman and Mr. Balfour. The whole project has been received in the coolest way from the first, and to that alone can fairly be attributed the disregard of the urgent whip sent out by the Government for Monday. The opportunity of defeating the Government, and inflicting lasting injury upon Mr. Balfour in particular, was, therefore, altogether exceptional, and on that account it is all the more to be regretted that it was missed.

The forthcoming visit of Mr. Gladstone to Birmingham is awaited with anything but agreeable feelings by the Chamberlainites. It is believed that Mr. Gladstone's appearance in the midland capital will be followed by grave consequences to the Radical Unionist party there, as it is well known that the constituency only wants an energetic working up by the Liberal leaders to induce it to throw off completely the spell of Chamberlainism. Mr. Gladstone's visit will, it is understood, be the first of a series by the Home Rule leaders with a view to the next general election. They have shown a far more considerate spirit towards Mr. Chamberlain than he has displayed to them, and it is to be hoped that there will be no more delicacy about attacking him in his own chosen stronghold.

We congratulate the Nationalists of Bray on the signal victory which they have achieved over their Coercionist friends. Some months ago an ornamental member of the Township Board, belonging to the Coercionist party, was about to go on a pleasure trip, and in order not to inconvenience his friends he resigned his seat, so that they might co-opt a person in his place. It so happened that the political parties at the Board were evenly balanced on the resignation coming to hand, the Coercionists having the casting vote of the chair to carry their man; and in order to lose no time they called a special meeting to co-opt a duly qualified person on the day the resignation was to be accepted. The day came, and the resignation was accepted in due course; but one of the Coercionists (Sir Henry Cochrane) failed to turn up for the co-option, and his party got caught in their own trap, as the Nationalists were there to man and forced the co-option. The Tories made a great row, tried to make their own meeting illegal, and withdrew from the boardroom. The popular party, nothing daunted, went on with the meeting convened by the Coercionists, and co-opted the secretary of the local National League and founder of the "Parnell Tribute" in place of the departed Tory. Sir Henry Cochrane, having been the innocent cause of the defeat of his party, proceeded in the Queen's Bench to disqualify the new commissioner by warrant, believing that the enormous expense of resisting the motion would terrify his colleagues on the opposite side of the Board. But he mistook the mettle of the National Leaguers of Bray. The case came before a full court, and the election of the Nationalist (Mr. T. A. Byrne) was confirmed, costs being given against Sir Henry.

If Mr. Balfour fulfils Mr. Goschen's ideal of bravery the Chancellor of the Exchequer cannot be very exigent in that respect. Mr. Balfour is the best guarded public official that fright has produced. He never goes, or rather crawls, anywhere without an escort of four detectives, all armed to the teeth. Mr. Balfour also brags that he carries two revolvers himself, and he evidently thinks it is a dare devil thing to do. On Wednesday evening when he was leaving the house his convoy of detectives was not to be seen. When he got half way across Palace yard he missed them, looked anxiously round, and still not seeing them he came back in great perturbation. He seemed

to think that there was a plot on foot, but his scared expression died away when he descried his bodyguard laboriously lounging under the colonnade. He then proceeded intrepidly on his way, protected fore and aft. On Friday he might have been seen dragging his lank body across St. James's Park to the Irish Office. Immediately after his came Mr. Parnell cantering gaily on a bay horse. Neither was recognised by anyone, and they did not appear to recognise each other.

The Unionists on both sides are aghast at Lord Carnarvon's Home Rule profession of faith in the *Times*. He virtually concedes everything that Mr. Parnell has said, and more. He goes much further than Lord Randolph Churchill did in his recent speech, and the declarations of the ex-Lord Lieutenant and the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer in Lord Salisbury's Government must be taken together. The recrudescence of Home Rule opinion in the Tory Party is a fact of the political situation which is engaging the most earnest attention of well informed politicians. Before the House reassembles after Whitautide this interesting phenomenon may possibly be presented to the public in a still stranger and more striking aspect. Lord Randolph Churchill can scarcely be satisfied with the studied effort of his late colleagues to ignore his pronouncement on Mr. Carew's bill, and it can be said with tolerable confidence that their disregard of his views will not make him less determined to press them on the attention of the country. The rank and file of the Tories so far confine themselves to anathematising Lord Carnarvon for his weakness, but their leaders must be aware that Lord Carnarvon's expression of opinion cannot be damned into insignificance. The Radical Unionists are particularly anxious over the turn affairs are taking and it is now deemed quite probable that the Government will be forced before the session closes to make a highly important and far-reaching announcement as to their Irish policy.

In reference to Lord Carnarvon's statement that one of the limitations with which he was prepared to agree to a scheme of self-government for Ireland was the appointment of a judiciary by the Crown, Mr. Parnell informs the Press Association that he does not recollect Lord Carnarvon making any limitation in the course of their interview. Mr. Parnell adds—Such a limitation would probably have followed from Lord Carnarvon's proposal that the powers of the new Parliament should come into operation by degrees. It would probably have been consequential upon this; but even admitting that he would have favoured such a limitation at the time, it would have only been temporary, because it would have terminated when the Irish Parliament arrived at its full powers. So far as the general tone of Lord Carnarvon's rejoinder is concerned, Mr. Parnell finds no fault with it, for, he says, it is the first distinct admission we have had from him. With regard to the three alternatives which Lord Carnarvon states presented themselves to him as a possible means of settling the Irish difficulty, the Nationalist leader remarks that the only solution which his lordship talked about to anybody was the solution of a separate Parliament. He did not, Mr. Parnell continued, mention to any of us either the Crown Colony solution or the continuance of the present system. "I may add," concludes Mr. Parnell, "that the empty house which has been referred to was not Lord Carnarvon's."

If English sympathy in every practical form could win Home Rule the Irish National cause would be triumphant before this. The address which Mr. Gladstone received a few days ago from the great bulk of the Nonconformist Ministers was one of the most remarkable declarations in favour of Home Rule which has recently been made. Another address, similar in its object, has been forwarded from England to the Lord Mayor of Dublin. This address is the outcome of a great social gathering which was held at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Hancock, 125, Queen's Gate, on the 28th April. It would be wholly unnecessary that such an address should appear at all but for the eternal claim of the Coercionists to have all the wealth and intelligence of the Kingdom on their side. The present address should go some way to check the claim. Mrs. Gladstone signs the address, and such names as those of Lord and Lady Aberdeen, Mr. and Mrs. Childers, Mrs. Mundella, Mrs. Jacob Bright, and Mrs. Stansfield are also attached to the document. But it may be urged that these are members of well-known Liberal houses and others will be found attached to the address which represent certain elements in the literary and what are called fashionable circles that strikingly indicate the growth of the Home Rule idea in England. We find, for example, that amongst those who have taken this means of expressing their sympathy with the Irish people in the present movement are Lady Hayter, Lady Sandhurst, Mr. Maddox Browne, Mrs. Michael Rossetti, Mr. Lewis Morris, Edmund Routledge, Mr. T. Fisher Unwin, Mr. Keegan Paul, Lady Mappin, and many others whose rank in the best circles of London society is well known. Society, in its restricted sense, never takes kindly to change. Radicalism, be it never so just in its purposes, finds no friendly footing in London drawingrooms. It is therefore all the more encouraging that in spite of class prejudices and social hostility so much that is highest and most estimable in London society should be found heart and soul with the Irish people in their struggle. It goes far to counteract the brutalities of the present regime, and to justify the forbearance and patience of the Irish people under terrible provocation.

A case involving a nice crux was decided by the Lord Chief Baron last week. The question had reference to the payment of rent upon an estate which is in process of being purchased by the tenants. Agreements for purchase, subject to the sanction of the Land Commission, were signed in 1886, and the question was—what position were the tenants in as regards the payment of rent after the agreements of sale were signed and pending the completion of the purchase? The test was applied when the landlord proceeded to sue for the rent accruing due in the interval just as if no purchase transactions had taken place. When tried before the County Court Judge of Meath a decree was given, in the one test case, for the landlord's claim. The case was argued on appeal before the Lord Chief Baron at the Trim Assizes, and last week his Lordship gave his decision. He said there were three possible decisions—First, that he should decide that the landlord was entitled to rent; second, that the tenant was only bound to pay interest, and, third, that it being impossible to determine at present what was the ultimate liability of the tenant,